

Potential Topics on Which to Draw Conclusions Based on Evidence Reviewed

The legislative mandate that led to the creation of the Genetic Task Force indicated that the GTF must consider information provided to it on:

- a) The incidence of discriminatory actions based upon genetic information
- b) Strategies to safeguard civil rights and privacy related to genetic information
- c) Remedies to compensate individuals for inappropriate use of genetic information
- d) Incentives for further research and development on the use of DNA to promote public health, safety and welfare.

GTF Staff identified the following areas relevant to the legislative mandate in which the GTF may want to draw conclusions based on the evidence reviewed in the first three GTF meetings.

I. Adequacy of existing Washington state and federal laws and rules

Evidence presented at the first meeting provided the background to determine if existing state and federal laws and rules adequately protect an individual's genetic privacy and protect individual's from genetic discrimination in employment, health/life/disability insurance, and other areas of public accommodation.

II. Genetic discrimination in Washington

The second GTF meeting provided an opportunity for the GTF to determine if genetic discrimination occurs in Washington or may occur in the future. Historical examples of genetic discrimination, a review of anti-discrimination laws and information about current health/life/disability insurance rules provided the background to determine if employment, insurance and/or other genetic discrimination occurs or may occur in Washington.

III. Adequacy of enforcement and/or penalty provisions in existing state and federal laws and rules

Information presented at the first and second GTF meetings provided the background to determine if existing state and federal laws and rules provide adequate oversight for enforcement and/or contain provisions for civil/criminal penalties for violations.

IV. Protection of genetic privacy in research

The first and second GTF meetings provided the background to determine if current practices, laws, and policies provide adequate protections for an individual's genetic information in the context of research.

V. Level of awareness among the public and policymakers of existing laws and rules

Discussions at the first GTF meeting centered on the level of awareness among the public and policymakers of existing laws, rules, and policies that address genetic privacy and discrimination issues.

VI. Newborn screening program

Several discussions at the first and second GTF meeting centered on the adequacy and appropriateness of existing policies with respect the newborn screening program.

VII. Protection of genetic information outside the health care system

Discussions at the first and second GTF meeting centered on how genetic information is stored and protected outside of the health care system, e.g. in the criminal justice system, and whether or not adequate measures exist to protect the information from access by third parties.

VIII. Strategies to safeguard civil rights and privacy related to genetic information in other states

Information presented at the second meeting provided the background to determine if genetics-related policy options adopted in other states are appropriate and/or necessary for Washington.

IX. Incentives to stimulate genetic research and development

The third GTF meeting will provide information about how government policy can stimulate genetic research that will benefit the public health, safety and welfare.